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Trinidad and Tobago

Post: Miami ATO

CBATO Facilitates Dairy Exports to the Caribbean

Report Categories:

Export Accomplishments - Other

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Report Highlights:

In March 2014 a Miami-based dairy distributor made it's first-ever sale of U.S. fresh milk to Trinidad and Tobago, after receiving expert market guidance and valuable market intelligence from the Caribbean Basin Agricultural Trade Office (CBATO). FAS' partner organization, the Southern United States Trade Association (SUSTA), referred the company to the CBATO for Caribbean-specific export assistance, illustrating the collaboration between FAS and its partners in promoting U.S. agricultural exports.

General Information:

Issue

Acting on a referral from SUSTA, in October 2013, a Miami-based dairy distributor contacted the CBATO in Miami for assistance in growing its export business in the Caribbean. Until then, the exporter had made only small, sporadic sales to the region.

FAS (CBATO) Actions

The CBATO initially met with the exporter on October 23, 2013. During the meeting the CBATO provided a full market briefing of the Caribbean region. Having identified several export opportunities, the following day the CBATO supplied the exporter with the following:

- Contact information on other FAS offices in the region
- Several FAS GAIN Reports
- Information on FAS' GATS database and sample trade data
- Information on U.S. retailers present in the Caribbean
- Contact information for major buyers in our region
- Information on key marketing events
- Information on Caribbean duties

The CBATO stayed in touch with the exporter periodically throughout the remainder of 2013, providing additional export guidance. Armed with all this market intelligence, the exporter made a market visit to TT in January 2014. During this visit, the CBATO helped them make contact with one of the largest import/distribution companies in TT.

Impact

As a direct result of the CBATO's assistance, the exporter was able to identify and target key markets in our region and eventually land a customer in Trinidad and Tobago (TT). This led to the exporter making its first-ever sale of U.S. fresh milk to Trinidad and Tobago in March 2014.

The exporter's success in TT is due in a large part to the combination of them being ready, willing and able to export and the CBATO being able to provide the company with the right market intelligence (target growth markets, buyer contacts, duties, etc.) necessary to seek out the export opportunity and capitalize on it quickly. TT is the largest market for U.S. dairy products as well as for U.S. agricultural products in general in the CBATO region, which includes 23 island markets. U.S. exports of dairy products have increased by 50 percent in the past five years, culminating in a record high \$26.3 million in 2013. By getting its foot in the door in the TT market, the exporter should be able to expand beyond fresh milk exports and eventually introduce its full line of

dairy products in this rapidly expanding market.